



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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GOVERNOR

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INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

May 6, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D., Chairman

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to Michigan's Accountability Workbook

The U.S. Department of Education has extended the window of opportunity to request amendments to Accountability Workbooks to May 16, 2005. Michigan has already applied for two amendments that were presented to you at the March 8, 2005 State Board of Education meeting. We were advised to modify one of our amendments, the minimum N for school districts, to make it apply to both schools and school districts. The USDOE interpretation of No Child Left Behind is that the minimum N for both school and school district is the same. Our other request, detailed below, is to use our definition of full academic year for English language learners (ELL) as the determinant of their first year in school in the United States. We have asked for this flexibility before, but it was rejected. Now that the statewide assessments will be given in the fall, we are asking again.

ELL Students in School for the First Year (Section 5.4)

Michigan has held statewide assessments for elementary and middle schools during the month of January. This has allowed the state to count English language learners (ELL) to be enrolled and educated in a school for the entire first semester of the school year before the assessment. The school district staff have ample time to assess the academic abilities of the student and to determine if the student is able to participate in the MEAP English language arts assessment. It gives the school staff some time in which to provide additional assistance to prepare an ELL student for taking the statewide assessment in English.

Beginning with the 2005-06 school year Michigan will hold the elementary and middle school assessments in the fall (October 3-21, 2005). If students are in school in the United States for the first time in the fall of 2005, they may not have had adequate time to have their English language proficiency fully assessed, and the school staff will not have had adequate time to prepare an ELL student for the statewide assessment in

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English language arts. Because of this change in the assessment window, we are proposing to define the “first year in school in the United States” as the student being enrolled in a school for the two pupil count dates prior to the assessment. The fall pupil count date, in September, will occur before the assessment window. The count date prior to that is the February (spring) count date. This would result in a similar length of time for schools to determine the student’s English language proficiency and provide support. The requested change will not affect high school students because the testing window for them remains in March and April.

Minimum N for School District AYP (Section 5.5)

Michigan has defined the minimum group size for reporting purposes as 10 and the minimum group size for accountability for subgroup purposes as 30. We are requesting a change in the minimum group size for schools and school districts as follows:

- ☆ 30 will be the minimum N for all schools and school districts with an enrollment of less than 3,000 students
- ☆ For schools and school districts with 3,000 students or more the minimum N will be 1% of the enrollment, except that
- ☆ The minimum N will be capped at 200 even if that is less than 1% of the school district enrollment.

At this time we have no schools with an enrollment of 3,000 or more. Of the 800 LEAs in the state we have 150 with enrollments of 3,000 or more. We have 4 with an enrollment of 20,000 or more (for which the N cap of 200 would be effective). Those are the school districts that would be affected by this change. A total of 95 Michigan school districts did not make AYP in 2004. Of those districts, 50 will have the minimum N adjusted under this proposal because the district enrolls over 3,000 students. Two of the 95 districts will be subject to the cap on the minimum N at 200 students.

We applied the proposed measure to our 2004 data and learned that the number of districts not making AYP would have been 72. The cap of the district minimum N at 200, when applied to the 2004 school district AYP data, would not have resulted in any impact on district AYP.

With your approval, we will send these requested amendments to the U.S. Department of Education.